



Rabbinate Approves of Organ Donation Guidelines

The Rabbinate has given its approval to guidelines determining when a person has died and may have their organs removed for

transplant.

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The Chief Rabbinate's highest body has given its approval to government guidelines determining when a person is considered dead and may have their organs removed for transplant. The guidelines are in line with Jewish law, the Supreme Rabbinic Council ruled.

According to the guidelines, a committee will supervise cases of organ removal in order to ensure that organs are not taken until after the donor has died according to Jewish law. Unlike the former guidelines, the current rules spell out in detail the methods and tools that will be used to determine brain death.

The Chief Rabbinate decided decades ago that brain death is considered death under Jewish law. However, for many years the rabbinate and Israel's hospitals failed to reach agreement over how brain death should be measured.

Some rabbis oppose the rabbinate's ruling regarding brain death and believe that only when a person's heart stops beating is the person considered dead according to Jewish law – making organ donation problematic as long as a person remains connected to life support.

Jews who believe that a person is only dead when his or her heart stops beating may choose to register as organ donors with the Arevim project. The registry allows potential donors to choose for themselves under which criteria they will be considered dead.

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